

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 SMS-02 HA-05
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R 011511Z AUG 78
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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
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AMCONSUL FLORENCE
USMISSION GENEVA
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, IT, PINT
SUBJECT: ITALIAN TRADE UNIONS SUGGEST CONCESSION NEXT
GENEVA EAST-EST TRADE UNION MEETING

REF: ROME 13414

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE ITALIAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS UIL (PRO-SOCIALIST, SOCIAL DEMOCRAT, REPUBLICAN) AND CISL (DC-ORIENTED CLAIM THEY HAVE ASKED OTHER EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS TO JOIN THEM IN SUSPENDING RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET AUCCTU AND ALSO TO CANCEL THE NEXT SCHEDULED EAST-WEST TRADE UNION MEETING IN GENEVA. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING UP ON THE ITALIAN TRADE UNION PUBLIC PROTESTS ON THE RECENT SOVIET DISSIDENT TRIALS (SEE REFTEL). THE ITALIAN PROVISIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION, CCU, SENT A LETTER TO THE SOVIET AUCCTU CONFIRMING IS SUSPENSION OF RELATIONS. THIS LETTER SAID: "THE SPECIFIC REACTIONS CREATED IN ITALY (AND IN OTHER VAST PARTS OF THE DEMOCRATIC WORLD) BY THE RECENT AND YET CURRENT POLITICAL AND JUDICIAL EVENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION (ON WHICH WE HAVE ALREADY EXPRESSED OUR OPINION AND CALLED YOUR ATTENTION) FORCES US TO CONSIDER THAT THE NORMAL DEVELOPMENT OF OUR BILATERAL COOPERATION IS INADVISABLE. FOR THE ABOVE REASONS, FOR OUR PART, WE CONSIDER THAT IT IS NOT CONVENIENT NOW TO IMPLEMENT THE EXCHANGES PLANNED FOR 1978". BEGIN COMMENT. THESE EXCHANGES REFER TO A PLANNED TRADE UNION EXCHANGE PROGRAM NEGOTIATED DURING THE VISIT OF SOVIET AUCCTU LEADER PIMENOV'S VISIT TO ITALY
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LAST YEAR. END COMMENT.

2. IN ANOTHER MORE SIGNIFICANT MOVE, UIL LEADER GIORGIO BENVENUTO AND CISL LEADER LUIGI MARCARIO TOLD THE EMBASSY'S LABOR ATTACHE THAT THEY SENT LETTERS TO THE OTHER PRINCIPAL AFFILIATES OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (ETUC) SUGGESTING THE SUSPENSION OF THE NEXT SCHEDULED EAST-WEST TRADE UNION MEETING IN GENEVA. THEY ALSO ENCLOSED COPIES OF THE EXTENSIVE ITALIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF THEIR PROTESTS AGAINST THE SOVIET TRIALS.

3. WE HAVE HEARD FROM RELIABLE LABOR SOURCES THAT BENVENUTO AND MARCARIO HAVE INDICATED TO THE AFL/CIO THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO JOIN WITH THE AFL/CIO IN SPONSORING ANOTHER SAKAROV HEARING ALONG THE LINES OF THE SAKAROV HEARING HELD IN ROME IN LATE NOVEMBER 1977.

4. UIL SOURCES HAVE ALSO INDICATED THAT THEY PLAN TO RECOMMEND TO THE PROVISIONAL ITALIAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION CCU THE ORGANIZATION OF A FESTIVAL AND DEMONSTRATION SOMETIME IN SEPTEMBER TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE PLIGHT OF

THE SOVIET AND CZECH DISSIDENTS AND WORKERS. THEY CLAIM THAT UIL WILL SPONSOR SUCH A DEMONSTRATION ALONE IF THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED CGIL AND THE CISL (DC-ORIENTED) DO NOT ACCEPT THEIR RECOMMENDATION.

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USMISSION GENEVA

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AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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5. COMMENT: OUR LABOR SOURCES WERE NOT TOO OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF FAVORABLE RESPONSES FROM THE
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GERMAN DGB AND THE BRITISH TUC TO THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS SINCE BOTH OF THESE INFLUENTIAL EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS HAVE BEEN SO DEEPLY INVOLVED IN EST-WEST LABOR EXCHANGES AND IN ATTEMPTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET AUCCTU. HOWEVER, SOME UIL SOURCES BELIEVE THAT SUCH A SUSPENSION OF RELATIONS AND OF THE NEXT GENEVA EAST-WEST TRADE UNION MEETING IS THE NEXT LOGICAL AND MEANINGFUL MOVE SINCE CHARGES OF VIOLATIONS OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND OTHER ILO CONVENTIONS HAVE BEEN FILED BY WEST EUROPEAN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND POLAND IN THE ILO.

6. THE IMPACT OF CISL'S SUPPORT FOR THE CCU'S SUSPENSION OF RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET AUCCTU WAS REDUCED BY THE FACT THAT CISL LEADERS MARCARIO AND GABAGLIO VISITED HUNGARY JULY 21-24 WHERE THEY HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE HUNGARIAN LABOR ORGANIZATION AND ITS LEADER SANDOR GASPARI, WHO ALSO SERVES AS PRESIDENT OF THE SOVIET-CONTROLLED WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS.

7. ALTHOUGH THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS OF THE ITALIAN TRADE UNIONS ARE VERY CHANGEABLE, THIS ITALIAN MOVE TO RECOMMEND CANCELLATION OF THE NEXT GENEVA EAST-WEST TRADE UNION MEETING MAY HELP PROMPT SOME OTHER EUROPEAN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT THE CANCELLATION OF THE NEXT EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD REPRESENT A MEANINGFUL TRADE UNION REACTION TO THE SOVIET TRIALS AND THE LACK OF LABOR AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION. HOLMES

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